

REMARKS

Applicants respectfully request reconsideration of the present application in view of the foregoing amendments and in view of the reasons that follow.

Claims 1-9 and 11-18 are currently being cancelled.

Claims 10 and 19 are currently being amended.

Claims 20 and 21 are currently being added, whereby these claims are similar to claims 10 and 19 as written in independent form, but are written to avoid any presumption of means-plus-function language under Section 112, sixth paragraph.

This amendment amends, adds and cancels claims in this application. A detailed listing of all claims that are, or were, in the application, irrespective of whether the claims remain under examination in the application, is presented, with an appropriate defined status identifier.

After amending the claims as set forth above, claims 10, 19, 20 and 21 are now pending in this application.

Applicants appreciate the indication in the Office Action that claims 10 and 19 contain allowable subject matter. By way of this amendment and reply, claims 10 and 19 have each been amended to include the features of their respective base claim and any intervening claims (note also that a "control means" has been added to the features of claim 15 that were added to claim 19, in order to provide clear antecedent basis for a feature later recited in that claim). Therefore, claims 10 and 19 are now believed to be in allowable form. Also, new claims 20 and 21 have been added which recite the invention according to claims 10 and 19 without any presumption of means plus function language, whereby these claims are understood to be allowable for the same reasons as set forth in the Office Action on page 8 with respect to claims 10 and 19.

As a procedural matter, the Examiner is requested to indicate (without including the details of the submitted information), in accordance with M.P.E.P.

Section 724.04(a), whether or not the references submitted in a Proprietary Information Disclosure Statement filed on June 8, 2000, are pertinent to patentability with respect to this application.

In the Office Action, the Examiner suggested a minor change to claims 6 and 15 in numbered paragraph 1) of the Office Action. This minor change has been effected by way of the placement of claims 10 and 19 in independent form, whereby the scope of these claims has been unaffected.

In numbered paragraph 2) of the Office Action, the Abstract was objected to because it was too long. A new Abstract is being submitted with this amendment and reply, which is within the 150 word limit.

Also, a new, more descriptive title is being submitted by way of this amendment and reply, to address the objection to the title in numbered paragraph 3) of the Office Action.

In numbered paragraph 5) of the Office Action, claims 9, 12 and 18 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite. Due to the cancellation of claims 9, 12 and 18, this rejection is now moot.

In the Office Action, claims 1-5 and 14 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,480,304 to Os et al.; and claims 6-9, 11-13 and 15-18 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Os et al. in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,821,933 to Keller et al. Due to the cancellation of claims 1-9 and 11-18, these rejections are now moot.

Since there are no other objections or rejections raised in the Office Action, Applicants believe that the present application is now in condition for allowance, and an early indication of allowance is respectfully requested.

The Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned by telephone if it is felt that a telephone interview would advance the prosecution of the present application.

The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any additional fees which may be required regarding this application under 37 C.F.R. §§ 1.16-1.17, or credit any overpayment, to Deposit Account No. 19-0741. Should no proper payment be enclosed herewith, as by a check being in the wrong amount, unsigned, post-dated, otherwise improper or informal or even entirely missing, the Commissioner is authorized to charge the unpaid amount to Deposit Account No. 19-0741. If any extensions of time are needed for timely acceptance of papers submitted herewith, Applicant hereby petitions for such extension under 37 C.F.R. §1.136 and authorizes payment of any such extensions fees to Deposit Account No. 19-0741.

Respectfully submitted,

Date

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